ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST

BRINGING OUR STORY TO LIFE

Heritage Matters

A publication of the Ontario Heritage Trust Volume 11 Issue 1 February 2013

Painted Ontario

In this issue:

Communities embracing our landscapes
Collections for the people
The world according to Homer
Off the wall

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A message from the Chairman

Art has been used, over time, to express our varied relationships to the places and landscapes that comprise what is now Ontario. Methods of artistic expression continue to be used by First Nations to denote a special and spiritual tie to the land. Visual art has also been used as a tool of representation and documentation by explorers encountering landscapes for the first time, and by settlers coming to terms with their new surroundings. Historically, artists were also specifically commissioned to document conflict and growth, and to represent and inform. Visual art, therefore, serves as something of an archival record – an expression of society at a particular point in time and place. In this way, it has provided perspective on significant built, cultural and natural elements, telling the story of the province's unique landscapes, buildings and places.

Artists, too, occupy an important place in the story of the province. Through their work, they have inspired us to imagine and interpret Ontario from different perspectives. They continue to capture and contemplate themes that explore the past, present and future of the province – urbanization, demographic change and the impact of technology on society and the natural environment.

The work of artists in Ontario, past and present, has made an immense contribution to the creative life of our province.

Tom Symons

Thomas H.B. Symons, C.C., O.Ont, FRSC, LLD, D.Litt., D.U., D.Cn.L., FRGS

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Feature story

Painted Ontario

Heritage Matters

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ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST
BRINGING OUR STORY TO LIFE

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Exploring the heritage of human rights

By Dawson Bridger

On October 18, 2012, the Ontario Human Rights Commission and the Ontario Heritage Trust held a dialogue on human rights, attracting over 200 people to discuss the past, present and future of human rights in Ontario. This event – and the unveiling of a provincial plaque by the Trust in June 2012 – were part of a year-long program to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Ontario's Human Rights Code.

Beth Hanna, the Trust's Executive Director, addresses the crowd attending the dialogue on human rights.

The dialogue was opened by Harvey McCue, Vice-Chair of the Trust and the day's emcee, and Barbara Hall, Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Over the course of the day, participants heard from a diverse group of speakers and organizations, and enjoyed three panel discussions.

Leading lawyers, academics and activists discussed how they have personally influenced change, the current state of affairs, and emerging human rights issues in Ontario. Participants also explored an expo of human rights organizations, with displays from organizations showcasing race, gender, sexual identity and diversity.

With ample opportunities to ask questions and share opinions, there was a great exchange of ideas among people who may not frequently interact. It is the Trust's hope that the conversations and connections that started at the dialogue will help to stimulate the work and activism of the people and organizations who attended, and positively impact the next 50 years of human rights activity in Ontario.

Dawson Bridger is a Community Programs Officer (Acting) with the Ontario Heritage Trust.

A tribute to Lincoln Alexander

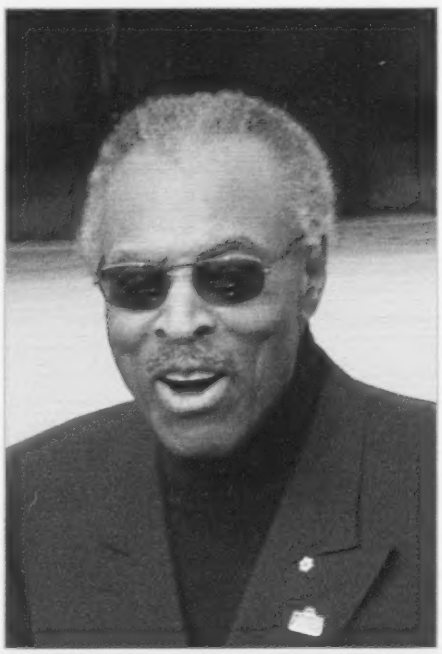
By Thomas H.B. Symons

I had the distinct pleasure of knowing and working with the Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander for six decades. As the current Chair of the Ontario Heritage Trust, I am honoured to pay tribute to Lincoln as our past Chair and to his many contributions to the life of his community, his province and his country. He truly was a remarkable man who was not afraid to challenge the status quo or to envision and pursue high goals. His actions and abilities helped to bring about important changes in education, politics and human rights – to name just a few.

Lincoln was appointed to the Board of the Ontario Heritage Trust in 2001 and assumed the role of Chair in 2004. During his tenure, he participated actively in Trust activities and events, bringing with him a sense of fun and a natural ability to connect meaningfully with people in communities across the province. Lincoln also demonstrated a special care and concern for the institutions and heritage of the province. His tenacity and commitment to heritage preservation and promotion before, during and after his time as Chair was a great support to the work of the Trust.

Lincoln's life of public service, his commitment to hard work, his belief in the importance of education, and his faith in the potential of youth set a wonderful example for all Canadians. He was a splendid friend to heritage and a true statesman. He will be greatly missed.

Thomas Symons is the Chair of the Ontario Heritage Trust.



The Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander, 1922-2012.

Heritage and the arts: Seeing Ontario from a whole new perspective

By Mike Sawchuck

Daytrippers and cultural explorers will have the opportunity to see the province in a whole new light during Doors Open Ontario 2013. The provincewide theme this year – Cultural expressions – encourages participating communities to celebrate the relationship between heritage and the arts during local Doors Open events. Explore arts and cultural centres or places that have been captured in famous works of art. Experience special thematic programming – art exhibits, workshops, demonstrations, theatrical performances or concerts. However you participate, you will have the opportunity to view some of Ontario's most interesting landscapes through the eyes of an artist.

A number of new communities join the program for the first time in 2013, giving loyal program followers a supply of new and interesting sites to visit. With over 55 separate events, there will be a wide choice of travel opportunities and destinations. And, as always, admission to Doors Open Ontario sites is completely FREE – so, there's no better time to experience all that our province has to offer.

Mike Sawchuck is a Community Programs Officer with the Trust.

Artist Sylvio Gagnon displays his painting of the Veterans Memorial Building during Doors Open Markham.

This year's events begin in April and continue through the spring, summer and early autumn. Visit the Doors Open Ontario website at www.doorsopenontario.on.ca, or call 1-800-ONTARIO (1-800-668-2746) for a copy of our new program brochure.

Archeological treasure in a

Reprinted with permission (Windspeaker, Volume 28, Issue 4, 2010)

Petroglyphs Provincial Park.

North America's largest collection of petroglyphs remained undisturbed for centuries. Then in 1954, three geologists out on a survey discovered these strange rock carvings on an outcrop of crystalline marble/limestone hidden deep in the boreal forest, right on the southern edge of the Canadian Shield.

The press was alerted, but the images remained untouched until 1967 when two experts from Trent University revealed that over many centuries, nomadic First Nation people had carved more than 900 petroglyphys into a 24.6 m x 14.6 slab of rock, deep in the forest 40 km from Peterborough, Ont.

Most petroglyphs, which are small figures carved in rock depicting everyday life, are found on vertical, sheer surfaces in inaccessible places in remote spots around the world. But Peterborough's petroglyphs are different and considered sacred.

These mysterious petroglyphs are carved into an outcropping of smooth white, crystalline marble resembling a giant plate that slopes slightly to the southeast and is completely surrounded by dense forest. Deep crevices in the surface are thought to lead to the spirit world and an underground trickle of water is interpreted as a place where the spirit speaks.

No official dates pinpoint when these mysterious figures were carved, but it is estimated that sometime between 900 and 1400 AD nomadic Algonkians discovered the marble slab.

Using sharpened stone and bone tools they created their stories in stone. And, because none of these carvings indicate daily activity, they are thought to tell stories of a deep spiritual nature about the culture and beliefs of those ancient nomads.

provincial park

By Katherine McIntyre

Fast forward to the late 20th century. When stories of this unique rock became publicized around the world, the Ontario provincial government declared the site of unusual historic interest.

In brief consultations with representatives from the nearby Curve Lake First Nation, they stepped in to protect the carvings by incorporating them into a provincial park. When they started to show signs of decay from algae and acid rain, they were preserved in a climate-controlled glass house while the surrounding park was left as a boreal forest.

"The glass house has proved controversial," said Anne Taylor, an Ojibwa and the Curve Lake Nation cultural archivist. "We believe that everything returns to nature. Originally the rock art was covered with moss to protect it. We could push aside the moss and see the pictures. Maybe glass and steel were not the right materials to use and we believe that the building doesn't really face east, which is our custom."

"But," she adds, "the rocks are a teaching place. You can feel their knowledge. People come from all around the world, searching for something missing in their life. It's a good place!"

Signs within the park request that visitors are quiet and respect the sacred rocks. Photography of the rocks is forbidden, but Elders are allowed to burn sage, cedar, sweetgrass and tobacco on an offering rock in sacred ceremonies within the glass house.

Curve Lake Nation and Ontario Parks have a unique partnership. Curve Lake Nation is the principal custodian of Petroglyph Provincial Park and tribe members are the official caretakers of what they proudly refer to as their Kinomagewapkong or Teaching Rocks. Their Petroglyph committee works with Ontario Parks. Students from the reserve are in charge of the front gate and work on park maintenance.

The small gift shop sells handcrafts made by members of the Curve Lake Reserve, and the Learning Centre, which displays information about the Ojibway Medicine Wheel, is run by Parks Canada.

To preserve the park as serene and quiet retreat, there are no food stands, just hiking trails meandering through surrounding forests, wetlands and rocky ridges.

Petroglyphs Provincial Park is located at 2249 Northey's Bay Road in Woodview, Ont. Call 705-877-2552. The park is open until Thanksgiving daily from 10 a.m. to 5p.m. Special evening programs are held every Tuesday and Wednesday through July and August.

The Peterborough petroglyphs are the largest known concentration of Aboriginal rock carvings in Canada with over 900 images representing a wide variety of animal and human forms, as well as abstract and symbolic artistic expressions. They provide evidence of the rich spiritual life of the Algonkian peoples who carved them between 900 and 1400 A.D.
A sacred site, the park is operated by Ontario Parks with Curve Lake First Nation as the spiritual custodians (who refer to the site as "Kinomagtewapkong" or Teaching Rocks). Curve Lake operates the visitor centre to communicate the spiritual significance of the Teaching Rocks

Katherine McIntyre is a staff writer for Windspeaker, Canada's national Aboriginal news source.

The world according to Homer

By Faith Hieblinger

The Pioneer Mill, 1880, by Homer Watson, oil on canvas, 86 x 127 cm, Royal Collection (Photo: Royal Collection Trust/© HM Queen Elizabeth II 2012).

Homer Watson, from the Homer Watson House & Gallery collection.

The local newspaper writes: "In this new world, great painters are fewer than in older countries, but it may be said of Homer Watson that he won, for his native land, distinction and honour in recognized art circles throughout the world."

Born into poverty, in the small southern Ontario village of Doon, Homer Randsford Watson (1855-1936) began his life in hardship. Losing her husband to typhus, Watson's mother struggled with five young children and a defunct mill. His schooling was marked by reprimands for his doodles and drawings. Eventually, he abandoned school at the age of 11 to work at the local mills with his older brother Jude. Watson and his brother enjoyed small moments of reprieve, exploring the forests and rivers around the local village. Then tragedy struck once again when Watson witnessed his beloved brother Jude's violent death in a milling accident.

Homer Watson spent increasingly more time away from home roaming the countryside, painting. At the age of 17, he travelled to Toronto where his love affair with painting was solidified and his dream of becoming an artist fuelled. Watson was urged to "quit the nonsense of going into art" and go "into the office and become a businessman." At the age of 25, however, Watson entered the Royal Academy of Arts Exhibition held at Ottawa's Clarendon Hotel. His painting, entitled The Pioneer Mill (1880), was purchased by the Marquess of Lorne, Canada's fourth governor general, who gifted the painting to his mother-in-law, Queen Victoria. It remains to this day hanging in Windsor Castle. Not only did this event establish Watson's place in history as a forerunner of the arts in Canada, but also it began the documentation of the relationship that he enjoyed with the land in Ontario at the turn of the last century.

Watson's work depicts moody pastoral scenes inspired by the dramatic landscape surrounding his home – overcast and stormy skies, often a lone traveller, a logger or a farmer engaged in the everlasting dance with nature. Combining the drama of nature with the widely held notion that Canada was a new world, unspoiled and virtuous, Watson created a romantic vision of southern Ontario. He avoided the vibrant colour and stylized forms preferred by his successors, the Group of Seven, for the studious observation of woodland, meadow, river and sky interspersed with a mill or cottage. He typified the rural landscape of the 19th century, recording the optical facts of the environment that he rendered poetically as well as scientifically.

In 1936, when Homer Watson died, Prime Minister Mackenzie King remembered him as a beautiful soul and wrote this in his diary about the loss: "a man I really and truly loved, a great gentleman and a great artist, his passing marks the end of an era."

Faith Hieblinger is the Executive Director/Curator of Kitchener's Homer Watson House & Gallery. For more information about this fascinating man and his collection, visit www.homerwatson.on.ca.

Painted Ontario

By Sam Wesley

The Trust holds an easement on St. Anne's Anglican Church in Toronto – where you will find the only known religious works of the Group of Seven.

Paintings are valuable sources of information for anyone interested in exploring our heritage. We can use them to glimpse into the past – to extract and explore information about the subject matter or about the context in which they were created and displayed. A painting is a product of a particular time and place, and although colours fade and paint may crack, a painting still meets our eye largely unchanged from the time of its creation. This time capsule-like quality is part of what makes paintings so compelling and intriguing.

But paintings can also distort time. Artists often look backward when creating a painting; they incorporate painting traditions and conventions that may have emerged centuries earlier, out of very different historical contexts. To further complicate the relationship between a painting and a particular time and place, artists also often look forward when creating a painting in an attempt to anticipate future viewers, future sites of exhibition or display and perhaps future commissions and career opportunities. Many artists try to move in new directions, making their works unique, groundbreaking or avant-garde. They want to be ahead of their time. Additionally, paintings, no matter how old, are active pieces of culture that are viewed, interpreted and recontextualized over and over, giving them new life and new meanings.

Despite these concerns, let us trace the history of painting in Ontario and examine how artists and artistic movements have influenced each other throughout the centuries.

European painting traditions were introduced to the province in the late 18th and early 19th centuries by gentleman officers, colonial administrators and their wives. Initially, painting in then-Upper Canada consisted mostly of small-scale watercolour landscapes. The painters were usually amateurs who, being truly "gentle" men and women – such as Elizabeth Simcoe, the wife of Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, and George Heriot, the Deputy Postmaster General of British North America – painted in their leisure time. Watercolour was their chosen medium because they were usually on the move and watercolours were transportable and dried quickly.

Some of these watercolours are lovely, intimate works, but they often also combine different stylistic influences to create interesting tensions. Many of the officers who painted in Upper Canada at the time learned to paint as part of their military training, in order to create accurate topographical records for military purposes. This purpose was reflected in their watercolours. Painting in their leisure time, however, they employed conventions from British picturesque landscape painting that softened ▶

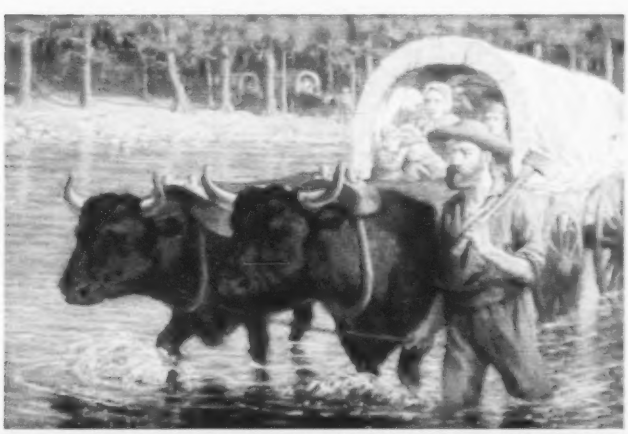
and idealized what was, in reality, rugged Canadian wilderness, producing works that are interesting, if somewhat unconvincing.

Notions of ownership and possession, both of land and of art, were central to the 19th-century British landscape tradition – be it military or picturesque – and it is interesting to contemplate the watercolours created in Upper Canada with these themes in mind.

In the first decades of the 19th century, most professional painters working in Upper Canada were itinerant portraitists from Europe or the United States who passed through, receiving commissions from a few wealthy patrons. But there was usually not enough money or work in the province to sustain them. One notable exception was the French painter George Theodore Berthon, who arrived in Toronto in the 1840s and enjoyed a successful career painting society portraits. Another was Paul Kane who travelled throughout the country painting portraits, landscapes and genre scenes in First Nations communities. His study and portrayal of First Nations often displays a genuine respect for his subjects, while showing the penchant at that time for recording, categorizing and examining these "exotic subjects" as part of the imperial project.

Throughout the 19th century as well, painters working in Ontario were influenced by European academic styles. But the realities of what was then a pioneer society often undermined their lofty aims. In the mid-19th century, before the introduction of artistic institutions, associations and galleries, the only public exhibition spaces for Upper Canadian painters were agricultural fairs. Paintings could be displayed here and prizes awarded for those deemed exceptional. These competitions, however, were often dubiously judged and the fine arts category was broadly interpreted. Paintings were exhibited alongside furs, wax flowers, crafts and tools, and even dentures. Interestingly, today, many artists have returned to this more eclectic view of fine arts – including folk art, crafts and other objects.

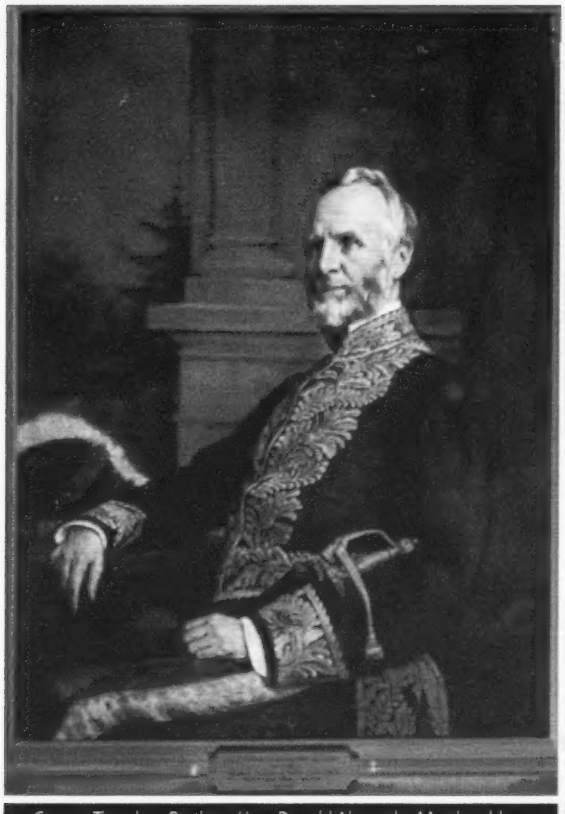
Elizabeth Simcoe, Fanfield on the Gananocoui, below Kingston, September 15, 1795, watercolour, F47-11-1-0-145, Archives of Ontario.



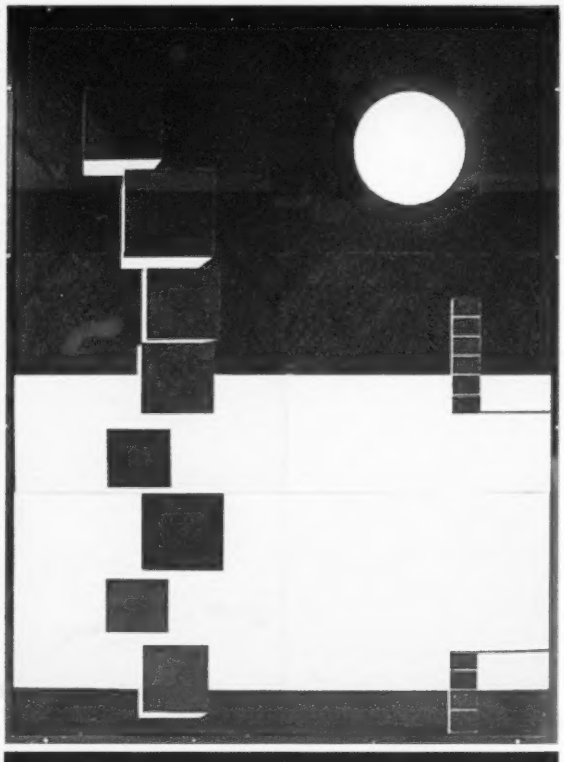
George Agnew Reid, The Homeseekers, oil on canvas, 180.3 x 273 cm. Government of Ontario Art Collection, 619838.

Starting in the 1870s, serious efforts were made to change this situation by establishing art institutions modelled on those in Europe. The goal of artists was threefold – to raise the status of the artist to that of professional, to create appropriate spaces in which to exhibit, and to improve Ontario's taste through education and exposure to art. The predecessors of the National Gallery of Canada, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Ontario College of Art, and the Ontario Society of Artists were all created in the last decades of that century. By this time, Ontario had numerous professional artists, most of whom had trained at art academies in Paris and across Europe. Their training was based on rigorous study of the human figure and three-dimensional representation through light and shadow. Painters were encouraged to produce highly finished, sentimental narrative scenes. Ontario artists Paul Peel and George Agnew Reid worked in this genre.

At the same time, too, landscape painting re-emerged as a force in the province. Influenced by the French Barbizon school and by the English landscape painter John Constable, painters such as Homer Watson created highly detailed, idealized rural scenes in dark, muted colours. Again, superimposing European conventions on Canadian landscapes created paintings that were occasionally incongruous, but that also reflected a province still being settled. It should be noted that, by this time, portrait painting was in decline as patrons were turning instead to the new art of photography.



George Theodore Berthon, Hon. Donald Alexander Macdonald [Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, 1875-1880], oil on canvas, 109.2 x 81.3 cm. Government of Ontario Art Collection, 693132.



Kazuo Nakamura, Two Horizons, oil on canvas, 261.6 x 196.9 cm. Government of Ontario Art Collection, 619763.

At the beginning of the 20th century, major changes were happening to art in Europe that reflected increasingly industrialized, urbanized societies in flux, and expressed a sense of anxiety and alienation that this change elicited. In Paris, for instance, Picasso and others were breaking down and reconfiguring forms and experimenting with the possibilities of artistic media.

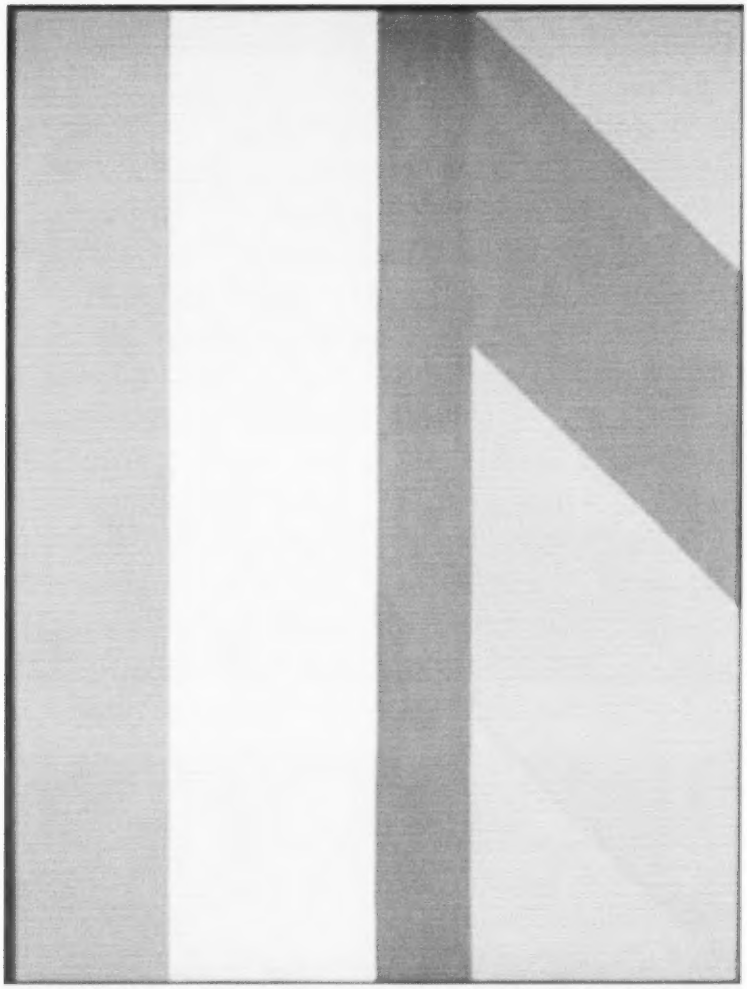
Artists working in Ontario were far removed from these innovations, but some, such as the landscape painter David Milne, began to move away from the influence of 19th-century European academic painting. Milne was less interested in describing external realities/details and more concerned with depicting the broader sensory experience of Ontario landscapes. Painters in Ontario slowly turned to more modern influences, such as the post-impressionists who had worked in France at the end of the 19th century – including Gauguin, van Gogh and Cézanne. They used bold colours, abstract shapes and free brushwork, putting emphasis on the texture of the canvas, the materials and the process of painting.

The First World War prompted many artists to break with older traditions in order to create distance from the societies that brought about the war, and to reflect a rapidly changing world. It was within this context that the Group of Seven emerged as leading figures in Canadian art. The Group's portrayals of nature as paired down, rugged, dynamic and romantic provided a new self-image for Canadians. More conservative critics at the time were not impressed – famously calling their works "hot mush" because of the loose brush strokes, thick application of paint and bold colours. The Group, however, soon became the standard against which art in Ontario was judged and Canada's first distinctively national school was championed in art schools, galleries and the press. Canadian identity was now defined as a response to the landscape. Although only tentatively modern compared to the direction painting was taking elsewhere, the Group of Seven nonetheless inspired a new generation to experiment and expand.

The Group of Seven's work revitalized Canadian art and suited Canada's urge to national self-definition. But it also brought about some problems for artists. Now, art was central to nation-building and there was an expectation that art should reflect and express national themes. This imperative was especially difficult for painters in the middle of the 20th century who were exposed to international styles that explored increasingly global, industrial, urban forms.

Soon, painters influenced by the abstract art coming out of New York were reacting against the Group of Seven. Kathleen Munn and Bertram Brooker were among the first to create and exhibit abstract works in Ontario. These paintings removed descriptive subject matter so that the work itself became the subject. The focus of abstract painting was directed inward – to the subjective feelings and expressions of the artist and to a preoccupation with the practice and the development of art rather than external subjects. The people, places and objects that cluttered the cities where abstract artists lived were gone from the canvas. They focused instead on formal issues of colour, space and tensions between chaos and control.

In 1953, a group of abstract expressionists held their first exhibition – Abstracts at Home – in the furniture section of Simpson's department store in Toronto (now The Bay at Queen and Yonge streets), hoping that potential patrons would see how modern and striking the works looked on living ▶



Jack Bush, Untitled, acrylic on canvas, 261.6 x 198.1 cm. Government of Ontario Art Collection, 619775.

room walls. The show was a success and the group soon expanded, becoming known as the Painters Eleven. They injected new energy and ideas into the Toronto art scene, finally establishing modernism as a force in the city.

By the late 1960s and in the 1970s, artists found that the inward-looking, at-times-overbearing and aloof qualities of abstract painting no longer suited the politically charged, socially engaged, cultural atmosphere. Post-modern artists returned to themes of nationhood, identity and narrative. Their works included social commentary and often referenced artworks of past generations. Artists such as Joyce Wieland, Michael Snow and Greg Curnoe worked with a variety of materials, including paint, and often incorporated materials, forms and colours from popular culture into their works.

Meanwhile, numerous First Nations artists were reinterpreting and recontextualizing traditional symbols, forms and motifs. Norval Morrisseau and Daphne Odjig, for example – who are associated with the Woodlands school, a group of predominantly Anishinaabeg artists – interpreted traditional imagery using vivid colour and, at times, western materials. Much of their works explore issues of First Nations identity.

In recent decades, materials, subject matter and style have become increasingly varied. Fragmentation, disorientation and ambivalence have often been expressed, but paintings and drawings have just as often been playful and humorous. It's difficult to determine how future generations will characterize painting from recent decades; perhaps it will largely be characterized by variety and diversity. That is something we can all look forward to as we reflect on the history of painting in Ontario.

Sam Wesley is the Ontario Heritage Trust's Site Coordinator for the Parliament interpretive centre in Toronto.

Off the wall

By Bruce Beaton

From wall to wall and kiln to kiln, thousands of individual types, styles and techniques of artistic graffiti can be found at Evergreen Brick Works, dating back to the early 1980s. (Photo: Michelle Scrivener)

Storytelling takes inspiration from many sources. Traditionally, museums weave a narrative from real objects: a vase, a coat, a building or a historical site. At Evergreen Brick Works, an environmental community centre in the heart of Toronto's Don Valley, some of the artistic and culturally significant graffiti helps tell the stories of the site's cultural past. It's written on the walls, ceilings and rooftops of this former brick-making factory.

Founded in 1889, the Don Valley Brick Works produced more than 43 million bricks a year, helping to rebuild the skyline of Toronto after The Great Fire of 1904. In the early 1980s, the existing kilns – built in 1957 – needed an upgrade but the natural resources necessary for brick production were all tapped out. The factory was abandoned in 1984 and sat vacant for almost 20 years, becoming a playground for urban explorers, partiers, ravers and photographers. The deserted buildings were also a blank canvas for local and international graffiti artists who left thousands of individual types, styles and techniques of graffiti on the crumbling walls for all to see and appreciate.

Evergreen, a national charity that makes cities more livable, broke ground on revitalizing the Don Valley Brick Works site in 2008, transforming the 4.9-hectare (12-acre) industrial complex with its crumbling post-industrial buildings into Evergreen Brick Works – a dynamic public space and showcase for green design and urban sustainability.

Protected by a conservation easement held by the Ontario Heritage Trust, the site contained thousands of artifacts in various states of preservation – kilns, brick presses, pulleys, hoppers, storage bins and conveyors – as well as workers' chalkboard timetables written in Italian and other mementos from our city-building past.

When Evergreen began construction, a central tenet of the re-design plan was its adaptive reuse – adapting old structures for new purposes. Today, the heritage buildings and artifacts have been largely preserved – some adapted for new uses, some archived and stored. Others have been left in place, including the extensive artistic examples of graffiti visible throughout the site. A conservation easement protects this culturally significant graffiti as a layer of the site's history.

In the spring of 2013, Evergreen will launch Graffiti Works: 1989-2008. Created in cooperation with the University of Toronto, Master of Museum Studies Program, this exhibition will tell the history of the site's lost years, and will feature a self-guided exploratory walking tour of the onsite graffiti, plus offer video footage of local artists discussing the importance of these urban masterpieces.

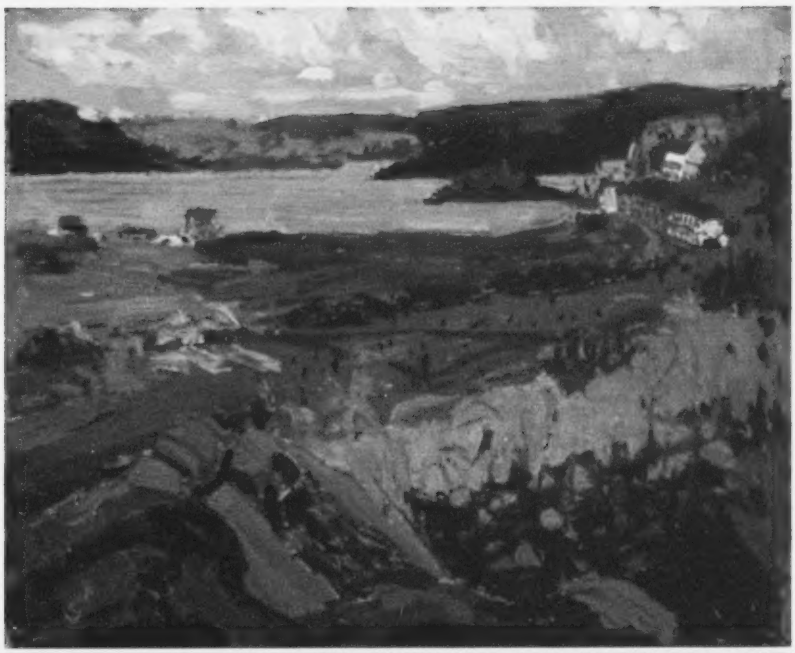
The story of the Don Valley Brick Works is told most noticeably by gazing at Toronto's skyline; but a different story is told in garish colours and images on the site's industrial walls. Now, a new chapter is unfolding at Evergreen Brick Works – one that explores urban sustainability and a greener future, while recognizing our recent cultural past.

Bruce Beaton is a Master of Museum Studies student at the University of Toronto. He and fellow student Shannon Todd are working on the Evergreen exhibit Graffiti Works: 1989-2008.

> ***Graffiti versus Conservation:*** *Typically, graffiti is unwelcome and discouraged on heritage buildings. It can negatively impact interpretation, accelerate deterioration, and encourage vandalism. Graffiti removal methods, too, can seriously damage finishes and materials. In rare cases, where graffiti itself takes on heritage value, it may be preserved for artistic, cultural historical and interpretive reasons. On the highly textured bricks found at the Don Valley Brickworks, the graffiti cannot be removed safely and environmentally without destroying the building fabric.*

Communities embracing our landscapes

By Beth Anne Mendes



Tom Thomson, Canoe Lake, Mowat Lodge, 1914, oil on plywood, 21.4 x 26.7 cm. Collection of the Tom Thomson Art Gallery, Owen Sound. Gift of the Ontario Heritage Trust and the Estate of Stewart and Letty Bennett, 1988.

Ontario has been home to Canadian artists of all disciplines. Since the mid-19th century, painters particularly have worked to capture Ontario's unique sense of place. From Elizabeth Simcoe's 19th-century watercolours of early Upper Canada to Jack Chambers' paintings of London and area during the 1960s, the Ontario landscape has inspired many professional and amateur painters. Fortunately, their prolific body of work has been, and continues to be, embraced by enthusiastic and vibrant cultures of support within our communities.

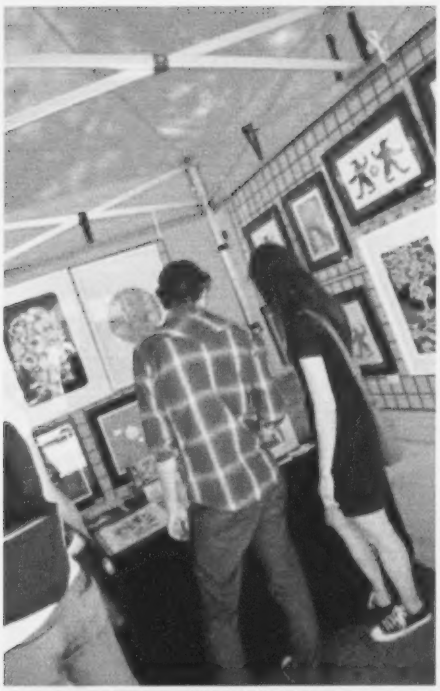
Simcoe (1762-1850) produced a series of sketches and watercolours that provided first-hand accounts of Ontario's early landscape. While artists such as Paul Kane (1810-71) and Cornelius Kreighoff (1815-72) were not specifically landscape painters, their scenes of colonial outdoor life included scenery that imparted information about the environs and the weather.

The pastoral influence of British painters such as John Constable (1776-1837) informed the work of many Ontario painters around the turn of the 20th century. Homer Watson (1855-1936) was strongly influenced by Constable, as were Arthur Lismer's (1885-1969) earliest works. Likewise, the North American art market at this time was heavily influenced by that in Britain and Europe. Overseas art entered the Canadian market through Montreal and New York. Apart from the grandeur of Niagara Falls, most Ontario landscape artists at this time preferred to represent scenes touched by the presence of people that captured the essence of the outdoor world.

A shift in this approach to landscape occurred in 1912 when Tom Thomson (1877-1917) painted his first vivid scenes of Algonquin Park. Using bold outlines, strong colours and short brush strokes similar to some post-Impressionist painters, Thomson recorded the dramatic park landscapes in his own distinctive style. His contemporaries – those who would later form the Group of Seven – soon followed him into the park, the Georgian Bay and French River areas, and the Algoma District. Often travelling by rail, these artists painted the wild, rugged and remote landscapes of northern Ontario. The largely untouched boreal forests, rocky outcroppings and waterways of the pre-Cambrian shield provided an abundance of subject matter. And the marked differences provided by the changing seasons encouraged the artists to return to paint the same locations repeatedly. Thomson and the Group of Seven had created a singular Canadian style with their unique renderings of the Ontario wilderness.

A contemporary of the Group of Seven, David Milne (1882-1953) painted some of his finest works in the Six Mile Lake region, just north or Orillia. As a young landscape painter, Doris McCarthy (1910-2010) travelled to Algonquin Park, Haliburton and Muskoka to paint the rugged landscapes for which she would become famous. Although McCarthy painted in the high Arctic and throughout Canada, she also enjoyed painting in her own backyard at Fool's Paradise in Scarborough. Ontario artists continue to paint landscapes that are close to home. Modern urban elements have found their way onto the canvases of many painters,

The Ontario Heritage Trust has unveiled plaques to 17 painters since 1956.



The art-in-the-park influence has recently given rise to larger annual events such as Toronto's Luminato, Nuit Blanche and the Outdoor Art Exhibition at Nathan Phillips Square. (Photo: Ontario Travel)

Adolphus George Broomfield (1906-92), Inglewood Road, Caledon Mountains, Ontario, c. 1950, oil on panel. Collection of the Peel Art Gallery, Museum + Archives. Gift of the Art Gallery of Peel Association, 1999. Purchased, John & Darlene Broomfield; the Artist. © John & Darlene Broomfield.

as seen in Jack Chambers' work (1931-78). Christine Pflig (1936-72) painted many of her noted Toronto cityscapes looking out of her kitchen window.

Throughout the province, there are thriving galleries, organizations and events that support Ontario artists and their work. In addition to larger institutional collections – such as those held by universities and the Government of Ontario – virtually every town and city in the province is home to a space where art is exhibited for the public to enjoy. Places like Homer Watson House & Gallery in Kitchener, the Tom Thomson Art Gallery in Owen Sound or Markham's Varley Art Gallery were initially established to showcase an individual artist or collection, but have developed, over time, into spaces that embrace and exhibit the work of others. Galleries such as the Above Ground Art Gallery at the Timmins Museum, the Station Gallery in Whitby or The Art Gallery (TAG) Cornwall strongly support and prioritize the work of local artists.

Small communities often establish art galleries and exhibits in the local library, a heritage building, community centre or municipal office. In 2010, the Town of Aurora opened its Cultural Centre in the restored Church Street School. Here, two art galleries share space with a museum and performance hall. In Brampton, the Peel Art Gallery Museum + Archives (http://pama.peelregion.ca) also incorporates historical buildings into its operating and exhibit spaces. In addition to exhibiting art, these facilities also reach out to their broader communities through public programming and special events for school groups, families and adults.

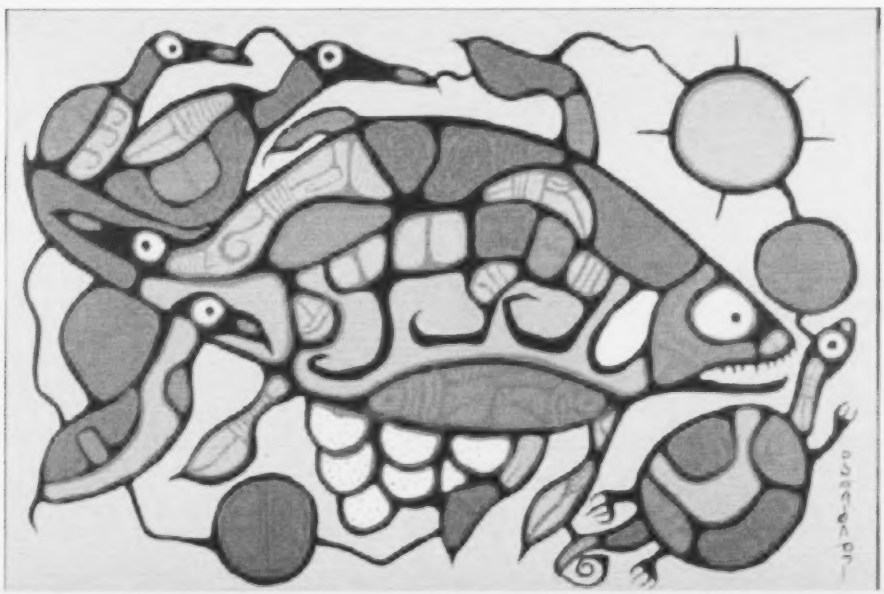
Artist-in-residence programs are common in Ontario educational institutions and galleries, but are also offered by some conservation areas, provincial parks, hospitals and health care centres. Local art-in-the-park events, popular during the 1970s, continue to thrive. Often combined with local markets, festivals, fairs or fundraising events, these outdoor venues provide professional and amateur artists the opportunity to show and sell their work. For instance, the juried New Art Festival in Ottawa is run by artists for artists and is celebrating its 20th year in 2013. The art-in-the-park influence has also recently given rise to larger annual events such as Toronto's Luminato, Nuit Blanche and the Outdoor Art Exhibition at Nathan Phillips Square. In addition, local artists' studio tours give art lovers the chance to visit the working spaces of area artists and artisans.

The size and geography of Ontario – with its glacial features, abundance of natural settings, changing seasons and energetic urban centres – have always appealed to the creative spirit in painters. As artists continue to settle, live and work in this culturally rich and diverse province, our institutions, communities and art-loving public proudly encourage and embrace them.

Beth Anne Mendes is the Trust's Plaque Program Coordinator.

Collections for the people: The Government of Ontario Art Collection

By Lani Wilson



Life Regenerating, 1977, by Norval Morrisseau. Acrylic on canvas, 99.1 x 149.9 cm. Government of Ontario Art Collection, Archives of Ontario, 623855.

Of outstanding national and provincial significance, the Government of Ontario Art Collection at the Archives of Ontario began in the mid-19th century. It is comprised of approximately 2,600 works of art, including paintings, murals, works on paper, indoor and outdoor sculptures, textiles, antique furnishings and decorative objects, located in over 75 government buildings across the province.

The collection's subject matter ranges from portraits of former premiers, speakers and lieutenant governors, pen-and-ink drawings by C.W. Jefferys commissioned by the Ministry of Education for textbooks, Aboriginal works from the Woodlands School and Six Nations, Group of Seven paintings by J.E.H. MacDonald and Arthur Lismer, to contemporary mixed media pieces by members of the Ontario Society of Artists, to name just a few.

In 1856, the first collector – Egerton Ryerson – was allocated $500 to purchase "artistic objects of taste" for Toronto's Educational Museum. These days, most works enter the collection through donation or transfer.

The Ontario Society of Artists (OSA) donated generously in 2005, 2007 and 2012. The OSA has a long-standing history with the provincial art collection. Donations started in 1872, the OSA's founding year. Since then, hundreds of the group's works have become part of the collection. These donations provide a true snapshot of the province's culture, landscape and people. OSA works depict a breadth of subjects in a variety of traditional and contemporary media, by both well-established and emerging artists from across Ontario.

Due to the size and scope of the Government of Ontario Art Collection, there are conservation challenges to be dealt with on a regular basis. Condition of the artworks can be affected by building renovations and closures. A recent acquisition facing this type of challenge was a collection of over 50 pieces by Moma Markovich that were commissioned by the Ministry of Natural Resources in the 1960s to illustrate Ontario's industrial and engineering feats throughout the 20th century in logging, mining, firefighting and other conservation authority program efforts. These artworks were held in temporary storage crates, awaiting a reinstallation that could not be completed. In 2012, the works were transferred to the Archives of Ontario where they are undergoing conservation and reframing so that they can once again be viewed by the public.

The Pioneer, 1784, c. 1926, by Charles William (C.W.) Jefferys. Watercolour on paper, 71.4 x 51.4 cm. Government of Ontario Art Collection, Archives of Ontario, 623327.

Space Composition Red, c. 1978, by Haydn Llewellyn Davies. Aluminum, 1097.3 x 609.6 x 548.6 cm. Government of Ontario Art Collection, Archives of Ontario, 623850.

Water Bombing, 1970, by Moma Markovich. Oil on canvas, 90.8 x 65.4 cm. Government of Ontario Art Collection, Archives of Ontario, 636457.

When the Archives of Ontario moved to its new facility on York University's Keele campus in 2009, the collection's storage conditions improved dramatically. Works in storage or awaiting conservation are safe in a climate-controlled vault environment, built specifically for art storage. State-of-the-art rolling racks for oversized pieces, storage shelves and flat storage cabinets were all designed to meet the needs of the collection. Temperature and humidity are monitored constantly to ensure a consistent environment, keeping the works in an optimal state for long-term preservation.

Not all works can be stored, however, in a climate-controlled vault in anticipation of conservation or repair. This means that some onsite, large-scale conservation projects must be undertaken. Indoor and outdoor murals and sculptures installed at government office buildings and courthouses generally require this type of attention. In 2011, a major restoration project was undertaken to repaint one of the collection's outdoor public sculptures in Windsor. Space Composition Red by Haydn Llewellyn Davies (1921-2008) was originally commissioned in 1978 to augment the area outside a government office building. Composed of angled aluminum beams, the sculpture began to rust and discolour over time. Because of its prominent downtown location, there was increased public demand for its revitalization. A team of professional art restorers stripped and cleaned the metal surfaces before repainting the work in the original red enamel paint – a finish often used on aircraft exteriors. This restoration project stands as an example of best practices for the conservation and long-time maintenance of public art in Ontario.

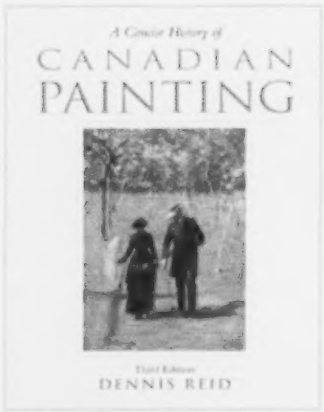
Conserving and documenting existing artworks is a key part of the collection's mandate. Of equal importance is the acquisition of new works that promote and showcase contemporary Ontario artists. Together, these efforts enhance the public environment in and around government buildings, and make art accessible to Ontarians now and for future generations.

Lani Wilson is the curator of the Government of Ontario Art Collection with the Archives of Ontario. To learn more about the Government of Ontario Art Collection, visit ontario.ca/archives.

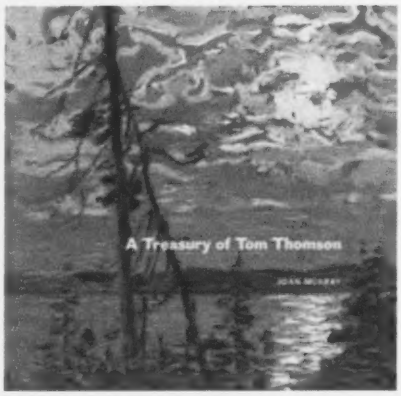
The Ontario Heritage Trust's own art collection speaks to the spirit of collecting and the inspiration of Ontario's artists and landscapes. For example, at Fulford Place in Brockville, the second floor of the mansion – which housed the bedrooms for the family and their guests in Edwardian times – also functioned as an art gallery. Varied in subject matter and media, the Fulford art collection features more than 200 pieces, hanging side by side with family portraits, bronze sculptures, seascapes, religious and genre paintings.

WHAT'S ON . . .

. . . the shelf



A Concise History of Canadian Painting, 3rd edition
By Dennis Reid. Oxford University Press, 2012. For more than 30 years, Dennis Reid's A Concise History of Canadian Painting has been the definitive volume on the art of a nation. Reid traces the development of distinctive movements, techniques, and subjects that would come to define Canadian art in the twentieth century. The highly anticipated third edition, fully revised throughout, brings the work up-to-date with a new chapter on significant artists and movements since 1980.



A Treasury of Tom Thomson
By Joan Murray. Douglas & McIntyre, 2011. In the spring of 1918, Lawren Harris and J.E.H. MacDonald met in the Studio Building in Toronto. Their friend Tom Thomson had died the year before, and they were determined to establish him as one of Canada's great artists. Most of his paintings and sketches were stacked up in the studio; they selected the best and made sure they got into Canada's most prestigious public and private collections.

Art historian Joan Murray has constructed a beautiful, intimate treasury of Thomson's "best paintings," as chosen by artist friends and major collectors. A Treasury of Tom Thomson presents an insightful commentary on each chosen work.

. . . the web

Art Gallery of Ontario – www.ago.net – Founded in 1900 by a group of private citizens as the Art Museum of Toronto, the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) is one of the largest art museums in North America. The AGO holds more than 80,000 works of art in its collection, spanning from 100 A.D. to the present.

The Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts (ANDPVA) – www.andpva.com – ANDPVA is Canada's oldest indigenous arts service organization, providing support to Canadian indigenous artists in Ontario and around the world. [Note: which First Nations web resource can be excluded here? Our word-count is too great and we need to cut it back]

McMichael Canadian Art Collection – www.mcmichael.com – The McMichael Canadian Art Collection is a major public art gallery devoted solely to collecting Canadian art.

Native Art in Canada: An Ojibwa Elder's Art and Stories – www.native-art-in-canada.com/index.html – Canadian native art, especially contemporary Ojibwa art, is sourced by a deep well of native legends and myths. It has become one of the last connections between the spiritual interpretation of a declining Ojibwa culture and the modern world.

Ontario Arts Council (OAC) – www.arts.on.ca – The OAC was established in 1963 to foster the creation and production of art for the benefit of all Ontarians. The OAC offers more than 50 funding programs for artists and arts organizations based in Ontario, with funds from the Ontario government.

Ontario Society of Artists – http://ontariosocietyofartists.org – The Ontario Society of Artists is a provincewide association for professional visual artists living and working in Ontario. It was founded in 1872, making it the oldest existing professional art society in Canada.

Tom Thomson Art Gallery – www.tomthomson.org – Established in 1967, the Gallery is named for the iconic Canadian landscape artist Tom Thomson and houses one of Canada's largest collections of his work. It is a regional public gallery and national cultural attraction with a top-notch and revolving program of contemporary and historical exhibitions, lectures, forums, films, concerts and workshops.

In the coming months . . .

The Ontario Heritage Trust regularly hosts or attends events that impact our rich and unique heritage. From provincial plaque unveilings to conferences, we are busy year-round with activities that promote heritage conservation in Ontario.

Here are some of the events and activities occurring over the next few months.
Visit our website at www.heritagetrust.on.ca for more details.

We're bringing our story to life for you!

February 17-23, 2013 – Heritage Week, various locations across Ontario. Communities across Ontario will celebrate Heritage Week with their own special events and activities – including exhibits, lectures, workshops and tours – showcasing the theme of Cultural expressions. Visit www.heritagetrust.on.ca for complete details on Heritage Week events.

February 18, 2013 – Stitching stories of the Underground Railroad – A Black History Month event, Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site, Dresden. Performing in period costume as a character born into slavery in 1852 Alabama, April Shipp shares her passion for quilting and explores its historical, spiritual and familial connections to Black history and the Underground Railroad.

March 13, 2013 – Screening of The Coffin Ship Hannah, Enoch Turner School House, Toronto. The Coffin Ship Hannah tells the extraordinary tale of horror and survival aboard the Hannah, which hit an ice reef in the strait near Cape Ray off the coast of Newfoundland in the spring of 1849, carrying 180 Irish emigrants fleeing the Irish Potato Famine.

March 23, 2013 – Shoe and Tell and Tea, Fulford Place, Brockville. Norma Shephard of the Mobile Millinery Museum & Costume Archive will present a retrospective that takes you through a century and a half of iconic women's footwear, exposing the factors that influenced shoe design.

April 27-28, 2013 – Bicentennial of the Attack on York and the unveiling of artifacts belonging to Major General Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe, Parliament interpretive centre, Toronto. Join us at the site where the province's parliament buildings once stood and participate in informative and engaging activities to commemorate the bicentennial of the Attack on York, a traumatic event that had an impact on Toronto's and Ontario's history. Our commemorative program will include the unveiling of artifacts belonging to Sir Roger Hale Sheaffe, who served as commander of military forces in Upper Canada from October 1812 to April 1813. His importance rests in both his military accomplishments and his achievements as president and civil administer of Upper Canada. It is therefore fitting that his artifacts be exhibited at the Parliament interpretive centre, on the site of some of his greatest achievements.

April 27, 2013 – Launch of Doors Open Ontario 2013, Guelph and Prince Edward County. From April to October each year, communities across the province open their commercial buildings, places of worship, gardens and other heritage sites to the public free of charge. Visit www.doorsopenontario.on.ca for details of upcoming events in your area.

May 4, 2013 – Antiques appraisal, Fulford Place, Brockville. Hear renowned appraiser Janet Carlile appraise 25 treasures – including your own.

May 26-27, 2013 – Portes ouvertes Toronto au Centre des salles de théâtre Elgin et Winter Garden, Toronto. Come celebrate the Elgin's anniversary during Doors Open Toronto and experience the grandeur of the world's last operating double-decker theatre. Guided tours available.

Kick off Heritage Week with us on Friday, February 15 at Toronto's Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre Centre. The Trust will also be organizing events, tours and lectures for some of its own museum sites – including the Parliament interpretive centre, Fulford Place and Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site. Visit our website for more information. (Photo: Peter Lusztyk)

For more information on upcoming 100th anniversary events at the Elgin Theatre, visit www.heritagetrust.on.ca/ewg100.

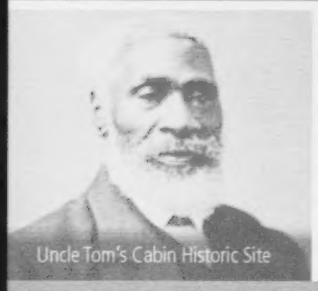
BRINGING OUR STORY TO LIFE

Ontario Heritage Trust

Photo: Fulford Place, Brockville

ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST
BRINGING OUR STORY TO LIFE

For more information, visit
www.heritagetrust.on.ca/museums
or snap this tag:


Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site

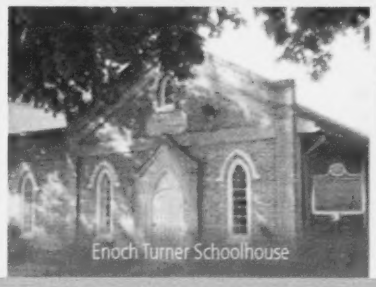
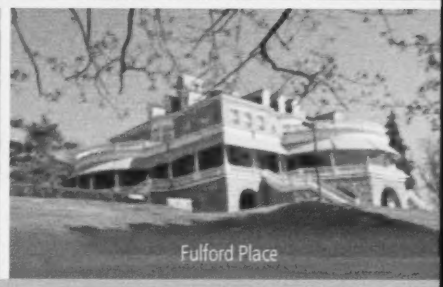

Enoch Turner Schoolhouse

Photo: David Lee
Parliament interpretive centre


Fulford Place

MISSING

Elgin Theatre Chandelier

Last seen in 1935. Aproximately 100 years old.
Stained glass with brass trim.

Last seen in 1935. Approximately 100 years old.
Stained glass with brass trim.

Please contribute to the Chandelier project.

Visit **www.heritagetrust.on.ca/EWG100**
or call **416-325-5025.**
Illuminate our past. Light our future.

100
THE ELGIN AND WINTER GARDEN THEATRE CENTRE

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